

Friday, September 29

We are entering the time of year with lots of holiday gatherings, programs and parties. Think about those times when you might have an impact on the lives of others by inviting them to a special church program. There is Trunk or Treat, the Children's Christmas Cantata, Advent Family programs, Christmas Eve Services and all our other worship services.

Develop a list of people who might enjoy these events and be introduced to our church. Plan to invite others early to these opportunities to experience Christ in our midst and follow through with those invitations – a reminder call, offer to pick them up, have a social gathering before or after one of our events. As you find a way to share with others that Jesus is truly the Reason for the Season write your plan here and ask God to guide you in do so!

Message Notes – September 24, 2023

*Harvest Time – Great Expectations**

- I. This parable (Luke 13:6-9) illustrates a spiritual truth that is not always obvious to people of faith – God _____ a harvest.
 - A. We need to ask ourselves if our lives are producing the _____ that God desires.
 - B. Just as the farmer has certain expectations when he plants his fields, God has expectations of _____.

- II. Some very specific _____ that point towards the harvest that God desires of our lives.
 - A. Jesus was questioned by the religious leaders of his day; they asked him what is the _____ commandment of all. (Matthew 22:34-40)
 1. Jesus answered with ancient words that come from Moses' time – Jesus answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your _____, and with all your _____, and with all your _____.”
 2. Jesus added, “The second commandment is like it, you shall love your _____ as yourself.”
 - B. There are other scripture that point out what God expects as the harvest of our _____.
 1. Romans 12:2 - “Do not be conformed to this world, but be _____ by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.”
 2. Micah 6:8 - “and what does the Lord require of you but to do _____, and to love _____, and to walk _____ with your God?”

* Scripture: Luke 10:1-20 and Romans 12:1-2

- III. Luke 10:1-20 - We read that Jesus sent 70 others, to every town and place where _____ himself intended to go.
- A. We're told in verse 17 about the _____ of the mission of the 70 – the harvest – if you will.
 - B. The 70 returned with _____ saying, “Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!”
 - C. We, like the seventy, are called to go forth and _____ our faith and be in a ministry that seeks to cure the ill and _____ that the Kingdom of God is near.

Study Guide

This study guide is designed for you to daily, throughout this next week, consider the lessons of today's message and delve further into scripture that will enhance your growth as a Christian.

Monday, September 25

Think about people in your lives that either profess no faith or are not living out their faith in a church community. Write their names here.

Think about your story of faith and how you've grown in the Christian faith. When and how did you become a Christian? How has your life been better since you've been a Christian? Think of reasons you would share with others why they should become Christians. Write them here.

Read the gospel lesson from yesterday – Luke 10:1-20. Consider what it meant for Jesus to send those seventy to share their faith. Think of the tremendous joy they shared when they returned from their mission? Where is God sending you to share your faith? Write your thoughts here and pray for God's guidance that you may be emboldened to share your faith.

Tuesday, September 26

Read the parable of the Fig Tree – Luke 13:6-9. This is a parable about God expecting a harvest from our lives. What harvest could God expect from your life? In the parable, the owner of the fig tree wants it cut down because it bears no fruit. The gardener replied by asking the owner to wait a year while he fertilizes the tree with manure. How can your soul be fed that you may bear fruit for God's harvest? What changes should you make in order to be productive in your ministry? Write your thoughts here and ask God to show you can meet God's expectation of a harvest from your life.

Wednesday, September 27

Read Matthew 22:34-40. What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul and mind? How can you love God with each of these elements of your life? A big clue to loving God is the second commandment Jesus shared – to love our neighbor as ourselves. How can you love your neighbors better? Could you invite them to a worship service at Central United Methodist Church or a special program that might be of interest to them? How is your love for God demonstrated each day? What are others seeing in you and your life that would make them also want to love God? Write your thoughts here and pray for guidance and courage to share your love of God and neighbor.

Thursday, September 28

Read Romans 12:2 and Micah 6:8. How is your life conformed to this world? What might you have to give up in order to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind?” What things are you doing to “do justice,” “love kindness,” and “walk humbly with your God?” Write your thoughts here.

In Matthew 25 we learn that when we do good for others, we are performing those tasks for Jesus. Does that knowledge help you have more courage in your witness? End your time of reflection in silence visualizing how the world could be better because of you!